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TAGS: [PREL](#) [MOPS](#) [ID](#) [LE](#) [XF](#)

SUBJECT: LEBANON/UNIFIL -- INDONESIA DEPLOYS SHIP TO ASSIST

Classified By: Pol/C Joseph L. Novak, reasons 1.4(b+d).

11. (C) SUMMARY: Indonesia will deploy a SIGMA-class Corvette to Lebanon in March to augment the GOI's already substantial contribution to the United Nations peacekeeping force (UNIFIL) deployed there. The ship will become part of UNIFIL's Maritime Task Force, according to the GOI. It is Indonesia's first peacekeeping operation involving a ship. The deployment underscores the GOI's strong support for international peacekeeping. The deployment also gives the Indonesian Navy--which is relatively insular--international exposure. END SUMMARY.

NAVAL DEPLOYMENT TO LEBANON

12. (C) At the request of the United Nations, Indonesia will send a Navy ship to the waters off southern Lebanon to serve under the auspices of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL). The ship, named the "KRI Diponegoro," is a SIGMA-class Corvette and is scheduled to depart Indonesia on February 13 and to arrive off the coast of Lebanon in March. The deployment will last six months. Deputy Director Fikri Cassidy of the Foreign Ministry's Office of International Security and Disarmament said the crew of 110 had completed training on February 6 and was awaiting deployment. Cassidy confirmed that this is the first Indonesian Navy ship ever to deploy for peacekeeping operations.

JOINING UNIFIL'S MARITIME TASK FORCE

13. (C) The ship, which is outfitted with a helicopter landing pad, would become part of the UNIFIL Maritime Task Force, according to Cassidy. That force operated on sea and land, in conjunction with UNIFIL land forces, to intercept smuggled weapons and other contraband. Cassidy said Indonesia was the only Muslim-majority country and the only developing country so far to contribute to the Maritime Task Force.

14. (C) Cassidy said press reports of a UN inspection team certifying the ship's worthiness were inaccurate. The usual pre-inspection visit for UN deployments was waived, he said, because the ship was one of the Indonesian Navy's newest and was built in the Netherlands. (Note: According to Mission's DAO, the ship has had some problems due to poor maintenance practices.)

15. (C) Indonesia has contributed extensively to UNIFIL. A fresh Indonesian battalion of 875 peacekeepers rotated into Lebanon in November, making this the third year in a row. Indonesia also currently has 175 peacekeepers in a UNIFIL force protection company and 75 in the military police unit, according to Cassidy. (Note: These figures differ from the ones quoted in recent press reports.) The crew of the Diponegoro brings the total to 1235. Indonesia has peacekeeping/stabilization forces deployed in other regions, including the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Darfur, Sudan.

POSITIVE EXPOSURE FOR THE INDONESIAN NAVY

¶6. (C) The deployment underscores the GOI's strong support for international peacekeeping. The deployment also gives the Indonesian Navy--which is relatively insular--international exposure. A lack of capabilities has kept the GOI from exercising effective jurisdiction over its vast territorial waters, which are adjacent to key international sea routes. For policy reasons, Indonesia has also balked at joining important non-proliferation initiatives. The Lebanon deployment should help the GOI take a broader view of its region and the international strategic environment.

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